

## **Education Advisory Board**

This active Board of citizen appointees was established by the City Council in 2001 to develop a relationship between the City and the School Board and to provide a forum for citizens to receive accurate information and provide input regarding relevant education issues. The meetings are regularly attended by the principals of our four public schools, a MDCPS region representative and other school district officials as appropriate to address particular agenda items. Also in attendance are representatives from each PTA, and from our sister cities, Hialeah and Virginia Gardens. Students and other citizens are also encouraged to attend and speak to the issues being discussed.

The EAB has assisted the City Council in numerous major events in public education in Miami Springs. It played an instrumental role in urging and collaborating with the school district over several years to build another high school in Hialeah, now Westland-Hialeah High School, to reduce the population at Springs Senior instead of greatly expanding it. Another EAB/City Council accomplishment involved changing the boundaries of Springview Elementary and Lorah Park Elementary. As a result, all children in Miami Springs are now assigned to a Miami Springs school. The EAB has insisted on prioritizing and improving the schools' academic excellence as well as the safety of the students. Community support for the principals' efforts in these areas has been crucial and the City, through the EAB, has provided that support. The EAB also backed extending the bilingual BISO program at Springview to the Middle School, and has essentially served as a watchdog and cheerleader to ensure that Springs school repairs and improvements are addressed by the district. These include a new gymnasium, auditorium, and additional bathrooms at the high school, and a state-of-the-art media center and computer lab at Springview. These are significant accomplishments given the budget priorities and challenges of the school system!

In 2008, the EAB initiated and led the City's development of an Education Compact with the School Board. This document provides a blueprint for future EABs and City Councils to continue to build on existing programs and innovative ideas which will enhance the lifelong educational opportunities for the entire community. The EAB will be using this document throughout this year to guide its efforts in making recommendations to the City Council.

The EAB works with the community to increase student internships and business support of the schools, to expand recreational and extracurricular activities, to implement strategies to increase the graduation rate, and to increase students' civic engagement in the city through a youth leadership council, youth leadership and service learning opportunities.

The EAB has enjoyed tremendous support from both the school district and the City Council and looks forward to working with Council in a positive collaboration with the school district to continue to improve the schools. Anyone who has a student in a Miami Springs school is very welcome to attend the meetings to offer suggestions or to bring to the Board's attention an issue that needs to be addressed. The EAB meets on the third Tuesday of every month during the school year at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall council chambers at 201 Westward.

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